

S.T.A.R.S. International Newsletter



Graduation Brings Out The *STARS*

Months of waiting, miles of running, hundreds of pages of reading, and countless push-ups and kick strokes led to the 2011 *S.T.A.R.S.* International graduation luncheon in Kenosha on October 9th. The few graduates remaining were the "cream of the crop" from 60 nominees who were slated to start this venture in January.

The Kenosha Bull & Bear Eatery and Tavern provided the idea backdrop for the graduation luncheon attended by parents, supporters, and siblings. Graduates received a broad array of diving certification cards and the applause and accolades of the S.T.A.R.S. Board of Directors. Following the luncheon the question that echoed throughout the room was "Can we still be involved next year"?

In light of the endless challenges the youth faced, the vast attrition, and the diminishing support it was easy to see the positive changes that the program delivered in our graduates including ownership of their personalized snorkeling gear to continue diving into the future. Best of luck from the entire staff!

S.T.A.R.S. Photographer Undercover?

For the past several months, few of us have seen neither hide nor hair of *S.T.A.R.S.* staff photographer Lisa Anderson. As a single mom, student, non-profit board member, and full-time employee Lisa literally emulates a pair of twins (frequently being in two places at once) during her incredibly demanding schedule. Breaking news came to Kevin's attention last week that Lisa was undercover at Alexian Brothers Hospital shooting a layout under the ruse of being a "real patient". Kevin took the challenge and sought out Lisa at the hospital to really find out where her head was.

Ironically, he found that Lisa had taken this assignment to great lengths, even undertaking a brain scan after some "simulated" black-outs. Well.... Kevin is happy to report that Lisa was stunned by his visit. The doctors are still looking for results of the brain scan and Lisa is back at home doing what she does best, keeping busy. *S.T.A.R.S.* wishes her a speedy recovery and improved health!



Kenosha or Not Kenosha?That is the Question

Conversely to how quick the Illinois Lattof YMCA program firmed up for 2012, the Kenosha program negotiations have met with repeated challenges and still lack a host in Wisconsin for 2012.

The Board is working diligently to swiftly secure a home and host within the Kenosha general area to run a repeat *S.T.A.R.S.* program using

both the scuba equipment bought in 2011 and our skilled-local resources. Look for more on this in the November newsletter.



President Targets 3 Teams for ICSSD by Ismael Torres

Every year the ICSSD holds an underwater competition like the one that was held in Kenosha by *S.T.A.R.S.* in May of this year. Last year there was a team comprised of *S.T.A.R.S.* graduates that competed and was able to take third place in the all adult competition. At the same time, they were the youngest team in the ICSSD to compete. Not only did the team place, but they were able to represent *S.T.A.R.S. International* in the ICSSD event as "certified divers". All of kids looked as if they had a great time in the events while competing against other adult club members within the Chicago area.

This year I am personally challenging all *S.T.A.R.S.* staff and graduates who have been in the program at some point to organize three teams to participate in the ICSSD underwater competition next March. It's a day of fun, team building, and meeting new people within the diving community. This precedent setting effort would represent Kevin and *S.T.A.R.S. International* acknowledging all the hard work that has been put into this successful program. So here's the question to all the guys and girls: **Who is willing to take this challenge on with me?"**

SeaSigns Instructor Ranks Triple

S.T.A.R.S. PADI Master Instructor, Mark Niewoehner, and *S.T.A.R.S.* Manta Divers co-Owner, Lisa Bain accepted completion of their SeaSigns instructor course on October 8th from SeaSigns Instructor

Trainer, Kevin Vaughn. The new certification will enable both these instructors to broaden the array of courses they offer to include a PADI Distinctive Specialty in SeaSigns. Congratulations to both Lisa and Mark!





College or Bust – by Ana Medina

Greetings from Illinois College! So far school this school year has been really tough because of my combined load of soccer, academics, and work. I typically work 10 hours a week in parallel with a nineteen credit-hours or six class schedule. Three of my classes are Art related and two are Economic related and one is a requirement. I will be declaring my major or majors at the end of this year which could possibly be Economics and Art. Related to my sports involvement, it wasn't my best year because our school didn't make the playoffs, but we finished strong.

This year I'm planning to join the Track Team (Layne Holter has to be smiling), but keep in mind that I've never done it before, although people have told me it's a good experience since it's a competitive sport where one competes for oneself. The season will start soon and I am anxious to say the least. Another thing added to my school year is our new staff member Kurt. Kurt and I have become friends and are planning a trip to Florida in December before Christmas. We are hoping to go diving in the Florida Keys so that I can school him on ocean diving. Next thing I plan to school him on is SOCCER!



New Board Officers Step Up November 2nd



Eight years from the inception of the **S.T.A.R.S.** International program a new leader is taking the helm

effective November 2nd accompanied by a supportive group of directors on the Board. Kevin Vaughn will be replaced as President by Ismael Torres (Kenosha).

Mitch Brandt will be in the Vice President position, Nicole Boyer will assume the Secretary role, and Kevin will step into the Treasurer position. All of the Board members will assume staff roles in varying areas of support for the 2012 programs in Illinois and Kenosha. Stephanie Bedolla and Thomas March (YMCA) will provide key-localized support to each respective host program.

ON THE SONAR

November - Staff solicitation occurs for both the Illinois and Wisconsin 2012 programs

December - Hopefully a staff Christmas outing

January - Discover Scuba session begin and

S.T.A.R.S. Makes it Big on Facebook by Mitch Brandt



S.T.A.R.S. has joined the crush of people, places, and organizations on Facebook. Join our new Facebook group, strangely enough named "**STARS International**" for the latest updates on what we are doing, what we have done, and our plans for the future. While **S.T.A.R.S.** has a very serious mission and purpose, it is our belief that this can be done in an enjoyable and exciting way. Our goal on Facebook is to increase the awareness of our organization and hopefully lead to growth and increased support. So if you are on Facebook, please "like us" so your friends will learn about us too.

We have just started our Facebook group, so it is a little barren, but give it a week or so. Soon it will be a fun place to visit to see how our various **S.T.A.R.S.** locations are doing and how our plans for the future are developing. We have exciting things going on with our new program at the Lattof YMCA in Illinois, and something REALLY exciting yet still under wraps and being finalized in Kenosha, WI.

This will be the place for us to share our triumphs and 'ah ha' moments. I look forward to welcoming all of you to our new Facebook group.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN



S.T.A.R.S. Get Deep into Hyperbaric Medicine by Stephanie Bedolla

“Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.”

On October 9, the staff from Kenosha *S.T.A.R.S.* program and graduating students paid a visit to the Milwaukee Hyperbaric Chambers in Aurora St. Luke's Medical Centre. Neither the students nor the staff were aware of how much history Milwaukee holds for diving and the local need for treating divers and other victims as well.

There is a lot of history in the Milwaukee chambers. For instance, in 1928 Joseph Charles Fischer, Chief Engineer at Milwaukee County Institutions, designed and built the first walk-in hyperbaric chamber in the United States. In 1936, Dr. Edgar End began studies in helium-oxygen compressors in this chamber, which led to a new diving record of 420 feet on December 1, 1937. Another little known fact is that in 1942 the first tables for diver decompression were published based on work in this very chamber. In the process, when the Navy reviewed the dive tables, they realized that they (the Navy) did not have the correct calculations. Milwaukee assisted in offering modifications to the tables so that they were able to correct instances where navy divers were still suffering from decompression illness. This was all explained during the 2+ hour tour of the hyperbaric chambers in addition to how it has changed the sport of diving, not only to make it safer, but more fun as well for everyone.

Game It Up Fund Raiser



Our next fundraiser is set to run on Saturday November 5th and will be held in the eye catching **Game It Up** gaming trailer parked at Felicia's Family Restaurant, 4311 52nd Street in Kenosha (53144). There will be two tournaments held on Saturday with 64 participants in each. The morning tournament will be for ages 6-12 who will be competing with the game "Mario Kart". The second tournament in the afternoon is for ages 13 and older who will be playing new "Madden 2012" football game. The winner of each tournament bracket will win either a gaming system or a 2-hour party that the winner can invite up to 16 friends to attend. The entry fee for each tournament is \$25 with proceeds going to **S.T.A.R.S.** International. Pre-registration is required for each tournament. In addition, **S.T.A.R.S.** staff will be selling raffle tickets at the event for \$5 each (3 for \$10) which will be drawn for raffle prizes donated from local businesses.

S.T.A.R.S. hopes to schedule additional tournament dates if there is sufficient interest. Since the owner lives in Carey, IL, it may be an excellent fund raising option for the emerging Lattof YMCA program.

From the Bottom of the Tank by Jorge Galvan



While working at the Woodfield Mall Rainforest Café in the habitat, I have made many new friends, but not all of them are human. The picture shown is Pete the Porcupine Puffer Fish which is well liked by the staff. Pete is just one of the hundred or so resident Rainforest fish that are actually been given names. Pete's typical daily life consists of swimming around the eye-catching arch tank in the center of the restaurant simply waiting with all the other fish for their collective feeding time. Stop by to watch me do tank maintenance some Saturday morning! Best Fishes!

